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**Town of Amherst
Conservation Commission Meeting
Thursday February 23, 2017**

Attendance: D. D'Angelo- Chair, R. Clemens, L. Gilman, R. Hart, P. Lyon- Selectman Representative,
B. Beckley- Alt and Frank Montesanto- Alt

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:04pm and stated Bruce will vote for J. Harvey.

Administrative Reports

Chair comments

The Chair had asked Bruce to write up some language about the Commission's mission regarding trails and he said he had done so and will get it to her.

Minutes-Sunday January 19th

This item was tabled

Old business- Names of volunteers read into minutes

The Chair recognized the following volunteers/ stewards into the record so that they are covered by town insurance while working as trail stewards:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| John Alderson | Stephanie Wales | Sandy Bradbury | Nancy Bennison |
| Deb Farrow | Larry David | Brent Forman | Danielle and Steven Pray |
| Dave Williams | Leslie Hinspeter | John Bement | Mark and Karen Woodbury |
| Roxanne Harmon | Alan Cort | Joe and Teresa Nielsen | Mary Snaith |
| Alyssa Parker-Roberge | Patty Lott | Kevin Wilson | Bob and Gail Kokko |
| Faye and Joe O'Neill | Tyler Davis | Rick Crocker | James Callahan |

Lee- update on Monson lot abutter issue with dead tree

Daryl showed a map of the Monson lot on the screen. The issue is there is a tree on the ACC property with risk concerns. Lee hasn't had a chance to connect with the abutter yet. Daryl will send the abutter an email tonight with an update.

Update- Sustainability Fair preparations

R. Hart described his plan to present the Lindabury Orchard and its management plans at the sustainability fair.

Update- Austin Rd property (MapGeo- computer-centric valuing challenges)

The Commission has previously discussed using the MapGeo information to help evaluate properties for land acquisition. Daryl did a walk-around of the Austin Rd property with Mr. Austin. This property is 15 acres with half of it wet and half of it buildable upland. When looking at the map layers, the wetlands don't show up and the wildlife habitat stops right before the property lines.

Daryl suggested that this section of town does not seem to be accurately mapped. She did some research and found this property hasn't been surveyed. She wanted to bring this information to the Commission because it's good to know the map may not be accurate before they solely use the map tool to evaluate properties for acquisition.

The Commission discussed the property a bit and decided to do a site- walk on Sunday March 5th at 1pm.

48 **Property management/ usability policies: horses, camping, fires**

49 The Commission discussed their opinions of permitted and non-permitted uses of ACC land. No official
50 policies were voted on, but it was confirmed that any fire would need permission and a permit from the
51 fire department. They discussed whether to allow camping and if they should identify a couple of good
52 camping sites. Horses were mentioned, but no policy was deemed necessary. The only issue is with the
53 infrastructure of the trails/ bridges and if they would support horses.

54

55 Frank arrived to the meeting at this time (7:43pm) and Daryl stated he will vote for V. Bennison.

56 Frank was asked about issues he sees with horses on the trails and he said horses have separate needs
57 on trails than humans do. There was a horse that went through part of a bridge not too long ago. If we
58 have to change the infrastructure to support horses, it will get costly.

59

60 It was suggested that signage be posted in the kiosks that the trails are horse-friendly for riding, but to
61 be advised to ride at your own risk. The ACC may want to look at directing horse riders around certain
62 structures that won't support them.

63

64 The website and what information should be posted on it was discussed. Lee suggested having a
65 'Restrictions' section or page. Anything restricted could be listed such as no bikes or horses on specific
66 trails listed, fire and camping by permission only. Whatever is not listed is assumed permitted.

67

68 Gordon suggested the following language: Our trails were not designed for horses. Proceed at your own
69 risk.

70

71 Will Ludt of the Heritage Commission noted that the metal detection policy is in the process of being
72 drafted.

73

74 There was a brief discussion about the ACC dropbox and storage issues. Jared needs to give dropbox
75 access to both Gordon and Simon in the office.

76 The ACC needs to eventually have limited access to the Town of Amherst network to keep their
77 documents.

78

79 **Topics**

- 80 • FOTO update- Frank

81 FOTO had their first meeting. During the meeting they drafted their objectives for 2017. The entire
82 document is in the dropbox.

83 Some highlights:

- 84 ○ They held an election for President, Vice-President and Treasurer. Frank is the President.

- 85 ○ There will be quarterly meetings with minutes taken

- 86 ○ Tighten financial plan

- 87 ○ Expand membership

- 88 ○ Ciderfest FB page is now the Lindabury Orchard FB page and will inform public

- 89 ○ Resume tree care

- 90 ○ New policy of disposing of pruning debris immediately after work is complete

- 91 ○ Address signage and communication network

- 92 ○ Add a kiosk

- 93 ○ Complete the shed

- 94 ○ Increase public knowledge and use

- 95 ○ Fundraise

96 • Mitch Greany- Souhegan senior project request
97 Mitch's project is: what environmental patterns have impacted the maple syrup industry in NH.
98 He asked the ACC for permission to tap 8-10 maple trees for sap collection data. His research of sap
99 collection will be compared to historical, national data regarding sap production per tree. His intention
100 is to see how climate change, this year's drought and other environmental factors have impacted sap
101 production in NH. The sap produced will not be used for sale of maple syrup. He is requesting
102 permission to use trees on ACC land because there are not enough maple trees on his personal land. He
103 will use taps that are 5/16" (health spouts) and will only tap one per tree resulting in no harm to the
104 trees.
105 Bruce asked where he wants to tap. 4-5 trees at Joe English and 4-5 trees at Pond Parrish. The taps will
106 be removed at the conclusion of the project.
107 Daryl asked for pictures and a copy of his final report.
108 He will donate the unused sap to local maple syrup producers and will begin tapping next week.
109

110 **R. Clemens moved to approve this project as proposed. B. Buckley seconded. All in favor**
111

112 **R. Clemens moved to enter non-public session at 8:42pm to discuss land acquisition. R. Hart seconded.**
113 **Roll Call vote: B. Buckley-yes, F. Montesanto- yes, D. D'Angelo- yes, R. Clemens- yes, L. Gilman-yes, R.**
114 **Hart-yes.**
115

116 At 9:14pm, the ACC reconvened in open session. **L. Gilman moved to seal the minutes of the non-public**
117 **session for 60 days. R. Clemens seconded. All in favor**
118

119 Gordon explained to the ACC that there is an RTP grant that is due at the beginning of June for up to
120 \$80,000. This could be used for bridge replacement. However, to apply many items need to be
121 prepared:

- 122 ○ Design
 - 123 ○ Cost estimate
 - 124 ○ Schedule
 - 125 ○ Matching funds for 20% of the cost
 - 126 ○ National Heritage review
 - 127 ○ Understanding of wetland permits needed
- 128

129 **Round Table**

130 Bruce said Alex is going to tap trees on Grater Rd this season.

131 Bruce said Jim Callahan needs another project to fulfill a project for UNH. Bruce wants him to create the
132 Black Bear trail that will connect Grater Woods and Converse Woods.

133

134 Frank forgot to mention earlier that there were 19 people at the FOTO meeting which was promising.
135 He also informed the Commission that Noble went up for sale today. It is 121 acres and is listed over
136 \$2 Million.

137

138 **R. Clemens moved to adjourn at 9:38pm. L. Gilman seconded. All in favor**
139

140 Respectfully submitted,

141 Jessica Marchant